OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR OF BOOKS
REGISTERED
20 JUN 1910
MADRAS.

THE CRITIC

A Bi-Monthly

Vol. I } Tuesday, 1st March 1910 { No. 5

CASTE AND THE DEPRESSED CLASSES.

Some time ago there was a meeting held at which very sympathetic speeches were made on the question of the depressed classes. We have hardly heard anything since as to what is being done to elevate those classes. There were also speeches and articles in the Reviews about the evil effects of the caste system. We do talk a good deal on public platforms but when it comes to doing anything practical, we fear, the enthusiasm displayed on the platforms somehow vanishes into thin air till, some months or perhaps a year or two later, the matter is taken up by some other would-be enthusiasts when more speeches are made and there is a fuss in the papers. Then silence and inactivity follow and so history goes on repeating itself. If one deeply considers what the practical means are by which the higher classes could really help the depressed classes, he finds it very difficult to mention any such means so long as the deep-rooted prejudice in the minds of the people against the lower classes is allowed to be perpetuated from generation to generation. It will of course be very difficult to eradicate such prejudice all on a sudden from the minds of the adult generation, for, it has grown up with them and however reasoning and fair-minded a man may be, it would still be very hard to get over the prejudices of a lifetime almost at a moment's notice. We would therefore suggest a remedy which would, in our humble opinion, go a great way, in the course of fifteen or twenty years to extirpate the prejudice from the minds of the rising generation at any rate.

Our suggestion is as follows. There is no doubt that the eminent speakers and writers on the subject are really earnest in their professions of sympathy towards the lower classes. Will it be too much to ask them, of course in addition to the various ways in which they might already be rendering help to the cause, to train their children in such a way as to prevent them from entertaining any prejudice against any man whatsoever on account of his caste alone? For that purpose it is necessary that the children should be kept ignorant of the very existence of the caste system. When they grow old and if they find it out for themselves they will not, we are confident, hold such perverse views about it as they would if they had been brought up from their childhood with a belief in and a knowledge of the caste system. If the educated men who are really in earnest that the caste system should be done

away with, on account of its baneful effects and because it retards the true progress of the people—and we flatter ourselves that their number is great—then the method suggested above cannot be difficult for them to put into practice. There will not then be any violent wrench on their own part from the customs to which they have been used to pay unquestioned homage and when their children grow to manhood, a new generation will have sprung up which would view the so-called depressed classes with less contemptuous spirit than did its immediately preceding one. And a generation or two later the unfortunate scornful attitude that is now adopted by the higher towards the lower classes will have disappeared altogether. Then what may not one hope to realise if caste disappears? All the petty jealousies that now exist between class and class will vanish and there will be an opportunity for a real union of the people. When there is union of the people true progress will follow as surely as day follows the night. And if at the same time practical steps are taken to educate the lower classes the period that will otherwise have to elapse before caste disappears will be shortened a great deal. We would not place so much confidence in the above method but for the fact that it has been followed by a friend of ours, whom for purposes of reference we will call X, and so far the results have been extremely satisfactory. X has three children the eldest of whom is a boy and the second a girl. They are respectively 11 and 8 years of age now. X has taken good care that no one should instil into the minds of his children any idea about what caste is. Till two or three years ago the boy was not aware what a Brahmin or a Pariah was; whether the words referred to men, animals or things. And the way the poor boy was made aware for the first time that the Brahmin was considered as belonging to a high class was in this wise.

Next to X's house there was an Experimental Post Office. The little boy was in the habit of running in and out of the Post Office for learning the correct time or to get stamps or some such thing. It may be mentioned here that the Post Office consisted of one room more or less square and another long room by its side which was partitioned into two or three rooms. The square room was used as the Post Office and the long one for living in. When the boy first got to visit the Post office there was a non-Brahmin as Post Master and the boy probably had a free run of the house. Sometime later the old Post Master was transferred and a Brahmin put in his place. Even after the advent of the Brahmin Post Master the boy used to be visiting the office; but it was ascertained later that it so happened that the boy went there either before or after school hours when the Post Master was in the office room and the boy was always received well, and promptly attended to. Some months later the boy went to the Post Office on a Sunday at about 12 noon. That was the Post Master's breakfast time and he was having his meals in the long room. The boy, when he went into the Post Office, not finding the Post Master went in quietly and in all innocence into the other room to ask for the stamps he wanted. Then there was trouble! The boy a non-Brahmin to have dared to go in when the Brahmin was having his meals. Horror of horrors! The Post Master jumped up, took hold of a broom that was handy and chased him but the boy was too quick for him. The boy was in such a fright when he reached his house that it took

him a few minutes before he could coherently narrate what had befallen him. He was full of wrath for he said the man who had always received him kindly ran after him, for no reason he could understand, with a *broom*! and he would never after step into the Post Office. Then it became necessary to explain to him that it was considered pollution for a non-Brahmin to see a Brahmin eat. But it is doubtful if even now he considers that he had done any wrong and if he had forgiven the unprovoked insult offered him.

Two more incidents in the case of this boy are also worth mentioning. The higher caste Hindus consider the barber as a low caste man and after a shave they have to bathe to cleanse themselves from the pollution caused by the barber's touch. But X's barber was one who used to serve Europeans and was always neatly dressed and except when one actually saw him plying his profession one could not take him for a barber. Once the children were playing together. There was some noise in the street, a procession or something passing with a band playing and the boy, who was always kind to the baby, asked the barber to take up the baby who was fully dressed in all his baby-glory and show him the *tamash*. And some friends, who were present were simply shocked at the conduct of the boy in letting the barber touch the baby when he had his clothes on!

On another occasion there was some festival in a temple towards which the father boy's had contributed something. The following morning the Brahmin priest of the temple brought some *Prasadam* in a dirty old brass tray which was covered with a bit of a cloth which might have been a chimney sweep's kerchief. The boy flatly refused to partake even a morsel of the *Prasadam* because of the unclean tray and cloth and because he said though he might be a Brahmin yet he was sure he had not washed his face or cleaned his teeth as was apparent from the traces of the previous day's *namam* on his forehead!

These incidents we have mentioned to show that if, no false ideas about caste—high or low—are instilled like poison into the minds of our children there will be an end of it in two or three generations. But then if we wish to perpetuate the system we are at liberty to go on building model *Paracheries*, constructing wells for Panchamas with American Dollars but always keeping them outside the circle and speaking on platforms for ever about the disgraceful state of the depressed classes. If any one is sincerely inclined to do any good to his country let him give this method a trial and induce the other would—be reformers to do so also. It will not cost them anything though it must be admitted they may not thereby become public men.

***

THE NEXT VICEROY.

Various names are mentioned in connection with the Viceroyalty which unfortunately will fall vacant in a short time when Lord Minto will complete his tenure of office. Among the names suggested are those of Lords Crew and Kitchener, Sir George Clarke, the popular Governor of Bombay, Mr. Winston Churchill and Lord Ampthill.

But will it be too much to hope to have one of the Royalty to represent His Majesty as the Viceroy in India? Next to the King His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales will, if it so pleases His Majesty, be the fittest person to rule India. Such a choise will be hailed with joy and acclamation by the people. India is a vast Empire in itself and a few years of practical administration of such an Empire as Viceroy by a future King of

England will not be without its own uses and will prove of mutual advantage to both the countries. What benefits may not one dream of from a King who when a Prince had administered India, had lived in the country and had moved with and known the people as they really are and understood their real wants and aspirations first hand?

Failing the Prince the people would wish to retain Lord Minto himself—the strong Viceroy who, in spite of the present anxious times and more or less disturbed state of some parts of the country, did not hesitate to grant us the boon of the New Councils. In Lord Curzon's second tenure of office we have a recent precedent for such a course; and if the Liberal Government which has come into power again in England lasts for a few months more there is no reason why Lord Minto should not be reappointed our Viceroy.

Failing Lord Minto one would like to have Sir George Clarke, the popular and sympathetic Governor of Bombay. A good father and a good husband (was there one heart in the whole of India which did not go out to him in mute symdathy during his bereavements?), a just and sympathetic ruler—and stern too when the exigencies of administration required sternness—who would not welcome him as Viceroy?

And last though not least we should like to have our old Governor Lord Ampthill, that nobleman doubly noble by birth and by nature, sent back to us, this time as the Viceroy. Madras will then be proud indeed and the other Provinces too for the matter of that; for had he not ruled as Viceroy once before so ably and well though only for a short period? Did we not expect him as a matter of fact to be made the Viceroy ere this?

***

H. H. The Maharaja of Burdwan has not yet made up his mind to express regret for the contemptuous epithet he used with reference to Mr. Keir Hardie.

***

H. H. The Maharaja of Patiala has ordered the withdrawal of the sedition case against the accused but has at the same time warned them to leave the State within a week.

***

MATTERS MUNICIPAL.

Messrs, Osborne Tirunarayana Chariar and Venkatalingam Chetty have all withdrawn their candidature to represent the Kilpauk Division. After his defeat last time when he contested the 13th Division against Mr. Runga Chariar Mr. Osborne openly expressed that he made a mistake in trying for a Commissioner's place. So it was a surprise to us when we heard that he was standing for the Kilpauk Division. But then of course he might have again begun to entertain altered notions about the *status* of a Commissioner. Be that, as it may, he has now withdrawn along with the other two and Dr. Clarence Smith is the only candidate.

***

THE IMPERIAL COUNCIL

18TH FEBRUARY.

The Hon. Mr. Dadabhoy's questions elicited the information that the Government proposed to entrust to Mr. Krishna Lal Dutta an experienced officer of the Finance Department, with the task of collecting and analysing the facts, examining the local conditions by which they are influenced and estimating their effect and then a Committee will probably be appointed to investigate the reasons underlying the facts and to decide what remedy, if remedy is necessary, lies within the power of the Government.

OFFICE OF THE ... BOOKS, REGISTERED 20 JUN 1910 MADRAS.

The same Hon. Member put some questions relating to the Income tax and other matters. Some more formal business was transacted, and

The Paper Currency Bill and the Indian Penal Code Bill (amending Bills) were passed into Law.

***

25TH FEBRUARY.

After various questions had been put and answered Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson introduced the Budget.

Then the Hon. Mr. Gokhale moved the following Resolution relating to the Treatment of Indians in Africa:—

'This Council recommends that H. E. the Governor-General be empowered to prohibit immigration of Indians from British India into Natal.'

In moving the above resolution the Honourable Member in his usual reasoned and cogent speech traced the origin of the whole of the Indian problem in South Africa, gave the facts and figures relating to the position and population of Indians—the indentured, ex-indetured, the traders and other Indians who have gone to South Africa at their own expense —in South Africa, dwelt upon the educational disabilities of the free Indian community and after condemning the utterly selfish and heartless policy of Natal to-day towards the Indian population said that the only way in which any redress can be obtained is by the Government of India adopting a stern attitude towards the Colony in return. With reference to Transvaal he said that that Colony sought to inflict galling and degrading indignities and humiliations on His Majesty's Indian subjects, and that India had no reason to be ashamed of the part which her children had played in the struggle against those disabilities and that the Indians in the Transvaal had suffered much for the sake of conscience and the country.

In the absence of the Hon. Mr. Harvey the Hon. Mr. Maxwell spoke in behalf of the Government and the other Hon'ble Members who spoke in favor the Resolution are Messrs:—Dadhabhoy, Chitnavis, Subba Row, Nawab Syed Mohomad, Sachidananda Sinha, Mudholkar, Hudda and Sri Vitaldas D. Thaekersev.

***

THE FIRST CASE UNDER THE NEW PRESS ACT.

The printer and publisher of the *Swarajya* (Allahabad), whose Editor has just been committed for trial to the Sessions, who filed a new declaration was informed by the Magistrate that this could not be done unless a security of Rs. 1,000 was deposited. The security was not forthcoming and the publication of the paper has been stopped.

***

The Madras Mahajana Sabha sent a telegram to H. E. the Viceroy [on the 7th ult: regarding the New Press Act submitting certain suggestions and requesting more time for public criticism, and in reply the Sabha received a telegram from the Private Secretary dated 8th ult. to this effect: 'His Excellency has considered it along with the communications he has received about the Press Bill and I am to thank you for your suggestion.'

***

A complimentary dinner was given to Mr. Ameer Ali on the occasion of his elevation to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. There was also an address to the new Rt. Honorable gentleman but the well-intentioned promoters of the address confidingly appropriated the signatures of some who had not as a matter of fact signed the address but only intended taking part in the complimentary dinner. And so Sir Ronald K. Wilson, Sir George Birdwood and Sir Henry Cotton

have written to the Times dissociating themselves from Mr. Ameer Ali's action as President of the All-India Moslem League, a body whose influence appeared to be on the whole distinctly mischievous.

***

After the diabolical outrage in the Calcutta High Court a notice was put up outside the Bar Library that no one will be allowed to enter it unless they had some professional work with any of its members. Now it seems that the police sergeant on duty at the door of the Sessions Court is armed with a revolver, and referring to this the *Empire* says:—The notice warned all would be assassins that they cannot intrude for purposes of murder without incurring the severe displeasure of the Bar. Of the two expedients we should say that the armed sergeant is far the more efficacious. All the same we do trust, for the sake of the commerce and industry of Calcutta, that should an anarchist get between the door and the jury box he will not duck as the sergeant pots him. It would be in just as bad form as to force his way into the Bar Library without permission—and might have infinitely more serious effects!

***

MOHABHUSYAPRADOPODDYATE.

The above is the title of a Sanskrit book of poetry in three volumes by Pandit Palmballab Sastri. No doubt it is a mouthful aud more and the *Empire* notices it thus :—It is not a patent pipe cleaner. It is not a freshly discovered variety of the Virginia creeper ; nor is it a new sort of fire escape. . . . It possesses tremendous possibilities—that title. As an addition to the Ango-Saxon vocabulary of invective it should be invaluable. You might wish, for instance, to hurl some special expletive at an offender which, while not lessening your own dignity, would double up your adversary and render reprisals impossible, and how would you possibly do better than this ? And ten annas only, is the price for this most admirabl Calcutta book of Sanskrit poetry. What, one wonders, would one get, on similiar terms, for R. 1 annas 4 ?

***

The *Bengalee* published a long interview which its representative had with Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra, one the of the nine deportees released by the Government of India. The same paper published another article entitled 'The debate on the Press Bill. Impressions of an onlooker.'

These two articles were reprinted in the *Standard* of the 19th Ultimo and the source was acknowledged, as it should be. But in the *Patriot* of the same date both articles were published but with this difference that the name *Bengalee* which was printed at the end of both those articles by the *Standard* were omitted. Of course the natural impression in the minds of those who have not read either the *Bengalee* or the acknowledged reproduction of the articles in the *Standard* would be that the interview was that by representative of the *Indian Patriot* and that the 'Impressions' were direct from one of its correspondents. It was probably the printer who was responsible for the omission of the name *Bengalee* but in such matters one cannot be too careful.

***

Mrs. Besant in a supplement to the Central Hindu College Magazine publishes an Appeal to the Government and to Europeans about the treatment of Indians. She ends by addressing H. E. the Viceroy thus:—You inherit the power of the sovereigns of India, 'we pray you follow their high sense of the duty of the ruler

600 008

and proclaim the reign of peace; bid all, officials and non-officials, to forget that their races differ, that their creeds differ and to remember that their humanity is one. For all efforts to change effects will fail, if causes are left untouched. Mutual trust, mutual sympathy, mutual respect-these alone can bind rulers and peoples together, and insult breeding outrage and outrage breeding insult wi l cease, when all know that your high displeasure will fall on each alike.' Those are the words of a cultivated devout, earnest and self-sacrificing English lady; and how painful it is to see that the work of such people should be spoilt by the 'folly' of some others.

If the news wired to the *Hindu* by its Benares correspondent be true, the Local Government are of opinion that her statements in the appeal to Europeans and Indians published in the *Central Hindu College Magazine* are perilously near to falling under S. 153-A of the Indian Penal Code and the matter is said to be under the consideration of the Supreme Government.

***

The S.I R. Chief Engineer at Trichnopoly sometime ago made an Indian (Ticket examiner) who was driving a bullock cart without lights on a moonlit night get into his motor and sit on the foot board and carried him to the Police station and charged him for driving his bandy without lights. The Ticket examiner charged the Engineer for wrongful confinement, assault and insult before the District Magistrate and the Engineer was convicted and fined R. 1 the Magistrate remarking that the accused had no right to arrest the complainant. There was a counter case by the Police against the Ticket Examiner for driving without lights in contravention of the municipal bye-law and the same magistrate though it was urged that the bye-law was not for moonlit nights, is said to have convicted him and sentenced him to pay a fine of R. 1.

In the north the doings of another European—curiously enough it is an Engineer again but this time only an Assistant—formed the subject matter of an appeal in the High Court of the North West Provinces. The Assistant Engineer seems to have found fault with some measurements of an Overseer and when the Overseer maintained that his measurements were correct, the Engineer got into a passion, called the Overseer some bad name, struck him with a cane and dragged him along by the neck.' The Overseer filed a suit for damages in the Court of the Subordinate Judge of Jhansi and claimed Rs. 2000. The Engineer admitted that he gave 'a smart rap on his calf,' and pleaded that the plaintiff's suit was bad as no notice had been served under s. 424 C.P.C. for, 'all that happened occurred in the discharge of Government duties and in the capacity of a Government servant.' The Sub-Judge gave a decree for Rs. 1,300 as damages but the District Judge dismissed the suit on the ground that the acts complained of were done by the defendant in his official capacity for which notice was necessary before the institution of the suit! But on appeal to the High Court it was held that the act or acts complained of were not acts done in an official capacity and that a public officer had no right to use insulting language to his subordinates and to commit assault upon them. In the appeal the Engineer appeared in person and contended that it was his duty to check the Overseer and to use 'any means to make him work.' The learned Chief Justice remarked that if the Engineer had been a jailor probably he would have been justified in chastising the Overseer. The above two cases we hope will be a good lesson to some of those high-handed officials who entertain

the foolish idea that they can with impunity take the law into their own hands. Such vagaries must be put down with a strong hand, for it is such foolish acts that irritate the people most and are really at the bottom of so much mischief.

***

POSITION OF NATIVE DOCTORS IN WEST AFRICA.

WHITE *v.* BLACK AND BROWN

The Departmental Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to enquire into the position of the Native Doctors in West Africa, submitted their report and their conclusions are as follows:—

'The Committee find that the witnesses who had local experience were practically unanimous in deprecating the appointment of natives of West Africa or of India to the West African medical staff.'

'The Committee are strongly of opinion that it is in general inadvisable to employ natives of West Africa as medical officers in the Government service.'

'It is possible that in a few isolated cases, *e.g.*, at hospitals, where the patients are always or practically always natives, it may be desirable to employ a native doctor, but such cases may be regarded as exceptional.'

'As regards natives of India, the Committee are for similar reasons (*viz.*, that in professional capabilities they are not on a par, except in very rare instances, with European doctors and that social conditions make it extremely undesirble to introduce native medical officers into the Protectorates where European officers live under the *mess* system and where a large proportion of them are officers of the regular army) not in favor of their employment, although they are not in a position to advise so definitely on this point, as the experiment has scarcely yet had sufficient trial.' and

'In any case the Committee are certainly of opinion that if natives either of West Africa or of India are employed, they should be put into a separate roster, that they should not be employed on military expeditions, and that European officers should in no circumstances be placed under their orders.'

Can any one reading the conclusions arrived at by the Committee think that it is anything but color prejudice that has been the cause of such conclusions? It is not that it is on account of the inferior capabilities of the Black and Brown doctors that they are not wanted. For, the prohibition is against all West African and Indian doctors 'even although educated in Great Britain, and taking, with highest honors, degrees and diplomas after examination at Universities and Medical Colleges in the United Kingdom.' Can prejudice be more degrading?

Commenting on the above report of the Committee the *Medical Times* remarks:—

'We can well understand that the native doctors are indignant at being classed as unworthy to be employed professionally in attending to persons of European extraction, and we must confess that we blush to know that English medical men could attach their signature to such opinions as those above quoted.........in the name of common sense and common justice let us ignore these contemptible sentiments and those who father them.'

That is the true English spirit and if there were some more of that kind visible in India we can safely guarantee that there will be very little of the disaffection left in the country.

And the *Antiseptic* writing about the report says:—The witnesses examined by the Colonial Office Committee were all medical men who had 'served in the Public Medical Services in Africa, India or other British possessions.' And long

residence in Tropical climates is apt to produce in Englishmen not only Hepatic changes but also cerebral changes...... Indians who have started with a severe handicap in competition with English doctors and beaten them will only laugh at heroics such as are found in the Committees' report.

The *Antiseptic* further says :—'India needs all the Medical men whom she can produce......As yet comparatively few Indians have turned their attention to the study of medicine. The more flashy pursuit of law has allured many. If some of our lawyers seriously think of settling dowu in West Africa to practice their profession we shall welcome their decision.'

Poor lawyers! we wonder if there were any lawyers among those of 'the Honorables' who promised their vote to Dr Nair but never voted for him.

***

TWO CASES AND THEIR MORAL.

The case against the Directors of the E and A. I. Deposit and Loan Society :—On the 14th instant the Chief Psesidency Magistrate discharged the accused in the above case. In doing so he remarked that there could be no doubt that the Directors did not realise the responsibilities of their position, and did not exercise a proper supervision over the working of the affairs of the Society as conducted by the Secretary but that it had not been proved that they acted dishonestly and in such a way as to put themselves within the criminal law.

The Bank of Burmah case :—The accused were convicted in the High Court Sessions. The first accused, the Manager of the Bank, was sentenced to nine months' and the second accused, the cashier, to three months' imprisonment.

In the first of these cases the Secretary seems to have been able to do what he liked with the funds of the society and the Directors were mere figure-heads having not even the slightest control over the paid Secretary. No doubt there was gross neglect of duty on the part of the Directors but none can complain about the discharge of the Directors who were rightly held by the Magistrate not to have acted dishonestly.

In the Burma Bank case it was the manager of the head office who seems to have been all powerful and according to his statement was the cause of the first accused's downfall. This Bank with its branches seems to be a sort of family concern. The Managers are all related and one of the Managers naturally was trying to help another. There would be nothing objectionable in this if other peoples' money had not been so conveniently utilized. We hope that the above two cases will open the eyes of the Directors and make them realise their responsibilities and their duties to the depositors and subscribers and not put too much faith in their Agents or Managers in matters of business.

***

THE ART OF REPORTING

—an Entertainment.

For a perfect specimen of the above art we commend the account given of the Sheriff's garden party which is found published in the *Indian Patriot* of the 14th Ult.

'It required the imagination of the poet to make those arrangements which Dewan Bahadur Mr (*sic*) Venkatasawmi Naidu had made in his gardens' says the *Patriot*. 'For one thing, it was a study in human nature to see European ladies forget the European gentlemen and the ice-cream (!) and looking on all sides, *on flowers they have never seen before*, (!) *on*

plants they have never seen (!) *on a scenery they could never hope to see again*(!)'

The Italics are ours. The reporter has apparently let his *poetic* imagination run riot when he says that the ladies forsook the European gentlemen and ice-cream (by D'Angelis) to see the worderful flowers and plants. One lady seems to have said that she would give her life for some plant. . There were attractions other than the beauty of the place the most important of them being *refreshments*, both European and Indian. That is just as it should be. There was an announcement by some body that the Sheriff's banquet will take place there one month hence which caused 'a sign of pleasure and of pain'. Pleasure perhaps in those who were sure of being invited on the occasion and pain in those who were not. A young 'lady was startled into saying 'we can see all this again so soon' taking it for granted that she was sure to be present. But a candid friend in the shape of a second young lady followed this up by saying 'are you sure to be invited?' It is to be hoped the author of this account will also be invited for then we can have the benefit of another poetic description of the banquet. 'Everything lent itself to a good description of (*sic*) which the poet alone could do any justice. Here was one indeed of whom Thompson when he wrote his Seasons never knew, for then he would not have written :

. . . . . "But who can paint,
Like nature? can imagination boast,
Amidst its gay creation, lines like hers?"!

One wonders if Mr Burchell would have exclaimed *Fudge* here.

*
* *

SOME COMPLIMENTS.

South to North:—'The prompt sentence of three years' rigorous imprisonment on the clever young gentleman who tried to draw a red herring across the trail of his fellow criminals should prove a useful warning, not only to other ingenuous dacoits with a turn for laying false information, but equally to that large section of the Hindu public which delights in obstructing and misleading the police in the execution of their duty. The fate of Gnanendra Nath Mozumdar, the criminal in question, will be an unpleasant shock to the Bengali papers, and the Bengali public generally, which rejoiced at the silly practical jokes played on the Calcutta police soon after the first bomb outrage.'

The *Madras Times*.

To Sir Herbert Risley :—'Even as the name of Ilbert is associated with another period of British incompetence, so will the name of Risley be associated with the most humialiting episode in the present Viceregal career' The *Madras Times*.

To H. E. the Viceroy :—'Lord Minto has now laid the coping stone on his policy of shilly-shally, and with the supreme and crowning efforts of passing an Act to control the Press and at the same moment setting at large the men who are said to be the cause of all the existing sedition, we may hope that he will pass away into well merited retirement.'

'If Lord Minto does a wise act, he first seeks counsel. If he is bent on doing a foolish act, he relies on his own judgment. If he desires commendation for his last move, he will find it in the Indian Press of Madras and probably in the writings of Bepin Chundra Pal and Krishnavarma.' The *Madras Times*.

To the Educated Classes.—'Sedition taken to mean anti-British feeling is the rule rather than the exception, amongst the educated classes all over India.'

The *Madras Times*.

To the Government servants:—'We are assured on the authority of those who are occasionally present (at the local Native clubs) that he (the average European if he could penetrate into any one of the clubs in the guise of an Indian gentleman) would find the most incendiary sentiments expressed not only by hot-headed young men, but by the oldest and most trusted of Government servants.'

The *Madras Times*.

***

GOOD ADVICE.

We give below an extract from a letter received by a friend of ours from a retired Madras civilian who is held in great esteem and remembered with gratitude by the many who knew him, even though it is nearly twenty years since he retired. We commend his views about the duties and responsibilities of the Press at this juncture to our readers.

'While the new India is shaping itself, and feeling its way towards a larger native Representation of all its interests both here and in India, the Press, which undertakes to put forward and possibly to guide the real Public opinion has a great responsibility in placing its matter clearly and above all with perfect fairness before its readers. Moderation in argument is obviously a desideratum and there should not necessarily be any hostility towards the Government of India which, foreign as it undoubtedly is, has saved your country from itself and must continue to do so, until a new national spirit having evolved India may be able to take care of itself. How long this process may take, not being a seer I am unable to predict; but you may be quite sure, that anarchy will follow if disruption between the present rule and yourselves is to occur suddenly; and all the force of a wholesome Press should be devoted to stemming any attempt at abrupt transition from one state to another.'

***

'*V.C*' writes a letter to the *Hindu* of the 21 ult.: under the heading 'Swami Baba Bharati and our Police,' in which he says that the Swami who is a nephew of the late Mr. Justice A. C. Mukerjee and is a 'poor unoffending Spiritual sanyasin,' arrived in Madras on the 16th ult. and is a guest of the Hon: Mr. Justice V. Krishnasawmy Iyer's. 'The correspondent says he found two constables prowling about the Judge's bungalow and garden. He says: 'The Swami is a guest of a high Judicial officer, no less than a High Court Judge, and a servant of the Government......will not a letter direct from the Government to the Judge and an answer from him satisfy all purposes?' And the *Hindu* in a small note referring to the letter says that so far as the allegations of facts are concerned, they may be considered as thoroughly authentic.

***

AGAVE AND RHEA.

The chief points in Mr. Mollison's Note on the Extension of cultivation of Fibre Plants in India are dealt with in the Indian Trade Journal and those relating to Agave and Rhea are summarized hereunder.—

Experience has proved that both Agave and Rhea required good land for rapid growth and the latter also required fairly heavy rainfall.

RHEA.

In Behar though Rhea has been cultivated extensively on the estates of the Indigo Planters it has not proved a profitable crop. The climate has been proved to be too dry to admit of paying numbers of annual cutting being made.

In Assam on account of the moist climate it thrives and five cuttings per annum could be obtained.

In the Shevaroys it is grown on a small scale.

Near Metapolliam a company which raised Rhea did not make a profit.

In Bombay experiments at Ganeshkind gardens and Kirkee have proved that the soil and climate of the Deccan are unsuitable for the plant under ordinary circumstances.

In Lower Burma a variety of the plant grows wild, on the banks of streams along the foot the Pegu Yoma range, whose fibre is used to make twine for fishing lines.

In Northern and Southern Shan States it grows wild and the fibre is chiefly used for making paper, but is also made into cloth and strong twine for fishing lines &c.

AGAVE.

This grows in most parts of India, on all classes of soil and under various conditions of climate. It yields the largest, quickest and most profitable returns under careful cultivation on *good land* in a *moist climate.*

In Assam it has not been found to be a profitable industry and the few plantations in the United Provinces have hardly reached the cutting stage.

In Coimbatore alone Agave fibre has been extracted on a commercial scale from the plants growing along the railway lines.

In the Central Provinces it has been but little explored and its cultivation is not likely to become popular.

In the Kawardha Feudatory state adjoining Bilaspur its cultivation is fairly large and the fibre is used in making ropes and cloth.

A Committee of the Board of Agriculture at Pusa consisting of Messrs Gammie, Burkill. Finlow, Clouston and Subba Rao are of opinion that a 'considerable increase of agave cultivation is possible in Assam and in tracts which have similar physical and climatic conditions. Successful rhea cultivation must apparently be limited to a comparatively narrow zone where both climate and soil are particularly suitable. The demand for fibres is bound to increase as they are essential for all branches of trade ; also that it is not likely that prices will fall so low as to render fibre cultivation in India unremunerative.

This is rather a negative sort of recommendation and so far as our Madras Presidency is concerned Rhea has not been cultivated on any large scale and where it was raised it did not turn out to be profitable.

As for agave Coimbatore is the only place where fibre has been extracted on a commercial scale, but it was only from plants along the railway line and not any regular plantation ; so if there were a systematic cultivation of the plant by capitalists with up to date machinery and other equipments for the proper extraction of the fibre it is quite possible to make it a paying concern.

***

A CLAIM TO PLEADERSHIP.

On Wednesday, the 16th ultimo, before an Hony. Magistrate, considerable confusion prevailed over the settlement of a dispute as to whether Mr. Price who had described himself as a lawyer belonging to the prehistoric times, was entitled to practice in the Police Court as a pleader, the controversy culminating in a scuffle in the corridor between Mr. Price and Babu K. C. Chowdhury, a pleader.

Mr. P. C. Chatterjee, Hony. Magistrate, was engaged in hearing a maintenance case. Babu K. C. Chowdhury who appeared for the complaint, was arguing the case on behalf of his client, when Mr. Price made his appearance in court, and began to address the Magistrate, saying that he was appearing for the defendant in the case.

Babu K. C. Chowdhury protested on the ground that Mr. Price was not an enrolled pleader of the court, and had no '*locus standi*' whatever. He had ascertained from the English department that Mr. Price was not an enrolled pleader.

Mr. Price (angrily): You can refer the matter to the Chief Magistrate if you like, you cannot object to my appearing now.

The Magistrate :—If you are not a pleader it will go hard against you.

Mr. Price :—Oh, yes, I know that well enough.

At the conclusion of the case, Mr. Price came out of the court room and confronted the pleader. He said that the latter's action amounted to defamation, and that he had no right to interfere in the matter, 'you must come with me to the Chief Court and explain your conduct or I will complain against you,' he said.

Mr. Price then dragged the pleader along the corridor into the Chief Court, but Mr. Swinhœ was at lunch, and the incident closed for the time being. But on His Worship, the Chief Presidency Magistrate, taking his seat after lunch, Babu K. C. Chowdhury informed him what had taken place and asked the court if the statement made by Mr. Price that he was enrolled by this Honour was correct.

The Court:—I have not enrolled him as a pleader. He produced a certificate that he belonged to some association in South Africa in 1834. I was not here then, so I know nothing about it (Laughter)

(The *I. D. News* and the *Empire.*)

***

MRS. ANNIE BESANT.

Every one must have read the learned lectures of Mrs. Annie Besant with great interest and the few remarks made in the course of the following *resume'* of the lectures, are made, every one may rest assured, in no irreverant spirit but only with an earnest desire to have the doubts and difficulties, reason throws in the way of a clear understanding of God and His ways, removed from one's mind if possible.

THEOSOPHY.

The first lecture dealt with the subject of Theosophy. According to Mrs. Besant, Theosophy in its present form dates from 1875 but it was as old as civilized and thoughtful humanity and was known under many names in ancient times. Now it had but been reproclaimed to check the progress of materialism which was advancing and spreading dangerously fast. The guardians of humanity thought it wise that the old truths should be reproclaimed, so as to suit the present environments. The idea of the immanence of God was the fundamental teaching of Theosophy. The knowledge of the divine should be sought for within oneself and not without ; once He was seen within He could be seen in everything without. According to the lecturer another great truth proclaimed by Theosophy was the solidarity of all life which was the corollary of the immanence of God. Theosophy was the water which quenched the spiritual thirst of varying grades of humanity. Theosophy presented itself to the world, not merely as a basis of religion, but also as a philosophy of life. From the philosophical point of view Theosophy was idealistic, based on life, studying thought and the laws of thought. Theosophical science looked on the whole world as a manifestation of thought and recognized the fact that matter existed in a number of different states.

THE LADDER OF LIVES.

'The ladder of lives' was the subject of the second lecture. The lecturer said that this debated subject of Theosophy was analogous to evolution in western science which took to the expounding of

evolution from the middle, so to speak, while Theosophy embraced a larger sphere with its vast cycles of changes from life when first embodied in matter, through changes of beauty and complexity, evolving and unfolding, livings forms occupying successive rungs of the ladder of lives. Before the planets came into existence, and the great worlds filled the interstellar space, the great universe itself was due to the creating, preserving and regenerating power of God. And this manifestation of Himself in matter, was the first creative act of the Divine.

It is just here that the greatest difficulty comes in when one tries to understand a little about God and His creation. Mrs. Besant says 'The first wave of life from the Divine gave birth to matter, from which all forms originated. The second Divine impulse resulted in the building up of forms, and which endowed them with qualities, which enabled matter to respond to stimuli from without. The third great plane pertained to the higher spheres of this universe where God is found.' A sincere enquirer after truth may be permitted to ask why it is that God whom we believe to be All Powerful should have adopted these three stages, and why man should have been evolved out of plant which in its turn was evolved out of mineral? The learned lecturer says 'the third great wave was the spiritual ensouled matter—in the forms which had been prepared for them. In the slow march of evolution from mineral to plant, from plant to man, the third impulse expressed the Divine idea. That is—God first made matter with the purpose of ensouling it; He next gave form and qualities to the matter; and next He enabled it to become the loving tabernacle of the spirit of God.'

If plant was necessary to man and mineral to plant could not have God created all these in a fraction of a second by His will and implanted the seeds of the divine in man simultaneously? If man is ensouled matter and the loving tabernacle of the spirit of God then, when, why and how did Evil and Sin enter into his heart? How did man fall and when did he fall?

Mrs. Besant referred to the inorganic as the first effort of the building process, and the gradual evolution from inorganic matter to the crystal, from the chrystal to the form which was neither animal nor vegetable, and which was the root from which the two separated. And after æons of changes the first dawn of consciousness was reached and it existed both in plant and animal though it was not fully developed. Meanwhile the supporting preserving life of God sustained these little growing developing lives till they grew into the human stage, the process being helped by the struggle for existence. This provided a dwelling for the spirit and was enough for it to evolve conciousness of itself as a living, individualized being. The different stages from the savage to the civilized man were described. The first may be called the butterfly stage of consciousness, when the mind flew from object to object and could not concentrate itself on any one thing, flitting from flower to flower, from desire to desire. Yet it was a ring in the ladder of consciousness that led to the Divine. Then there was the consciousness that was dominated by one idea which evolved the patriot and the martyr until, at last, man came to master his ideas and made them his servants and worked them out and then he reached the higher consciousness. Then progress was possible and from hero and martyr he reached the stage of Saint and entered the portals of initiation and was a human perfected. When perfection was reached he became God manifest in the flesh. There was no such

thing as unending sin and unending evil. 'It was within the power of each to stand out as a triumphant son of God.'

If every one had an equal start and the seeds of the Divine were implanted in every human being how did sin and evil which are diametrically opposed to all that is divine creep in and handicap some but left the rest whole? This is what one should like to be enlightened about. Man, let it be admitted, was evolved out of matter and reached a stage of consciousness. He had the Divine seeds implanted in him then. But he was left to shift for himself and sin and evil began to exert baneful influence over him. Why he should have been exposed to such influence or why sin and evil should have come into existence at all to ruin man, till then innocent and divine, is not explained.

'THE NECESSITY FOR RE-INCARNATION.'

This was the subject of the third lecture delivered by Mrs. Besant. What was meant by re-incarnation? Evolution was the word used when the lecturer had been dealing with the lower kingdoms—mineral, vegetable and animal. But re-incarnation had a very clear and definite meaning. It meant that man was a spiritual being clothed in bodies made of matter, that man himself was a spiritual intelligence, that the bodies were only the garments that he wore. With regard to the methods of evolution, it was briefly stated that what might be called embryonic spirits, the spirits that were to become human, hovered over the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms awaiting the time when the forms built up by the divine life would be fitted for their definite dwelling-places, the tenements in which they could live. The natural dwelling-place of man was in the spiritual regions. Into the ocean of earthly matter he plunged—whether conciously or unconsciously we are not told—to gain the experience which was the nourishment of the unfolding spirit. Having gathered it, he carried it with him into his own home for assimilation into capacity, into power; and only when the experience of one life was assimilated, did he return to earth in order to gain more. That conception of man as a spiritual being belonging to a higher world by right of birth, lay at the basis of incarnation. Only when man had learnt all the lessons could he be unloosed from the wheel of birth and death, pass with a widely unfolded consciousness to that magnificent superhuman evolution that carried him on to realise the deity himself.

We may frankly admit here that it asked, simply to believe these statements without questioning we have no hesitation to do so, but, owing either to deficient reasoning faculties or otherwise, we cannot say that we have obtained any rational understanding of the difficult subject so ably dealt with by the lecturer.

Mrs. Besant said that the necessity for re-incarnation was threefold. It was necessary from the logical standpoint to satisfy the reason as without it life remained an unintelligible tangle. Re-incarnation made all concerns of life intelligible; they could see life in its inception, in its evolution, in its goal, fully intelligible in the light of re-incarnation. Re-incarnation was scientifically necessary. Science could not answer many a problem without the conception of re-incarnation. Science was practically dumb before some of the most important problems of human evolution. Then again re-incarnation was necessary morally. There was a difficulty which Science could not answer if re-incarnation was not true. What was the use of all the qualities which they

built up as a result of suffering? Man became wise with experience of life; he died at the very moment when he was most valuable, when he had wrought his experience into the gold of wisdom. He died and his wisdom became useless and the harvest of his life could not be turned to account. And it was wisdom which the earth wanted. If the best and the noblest was taken away from the earth into worlds where there were no opportunities of exercising their qualities, then the whole of human life became irrational and qualities built up by experience were thrown away as useless rubbish. So reason demanded this theory of re-incarnation.

But unfortunately no reason is assigned as to why no man remembers anything about his previous birth. Why is not a knowledge of his past life and experience present in man? No one has attempted to solve this difficulty.

The lecturer said that if incarnation was true nothing was lost. On the other hand many acts of self-sacrifice would make the man richer. According to re-incarnation nothing was wasted. It was a theory which agreed with the scientific view of the conservation of all energy, the indestructibility of force. The theory of re-incarnation was a gospel of hope.

***

ON FAITH.

(By P. K. P.)

Continued from page 94.

(5). *Authority of Custom*—Every one is fully aware of the magical influence which custom exercises upon us in our feeling, thought, will and action. Any one, if he can but take the trouble to reflect for a while, will be fully convinced how very subservient—consciously or, unconsciously—we are obliged to be to the tyrannical self-will of custom. And yet it is curious to find that none of us dare question our own abject servitude and its consequent majestic supremacy. In one manner or another, the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the wise and the foolish, the learned and the ignorant, in fact all men without any exception, willingly or unwillingly obey its mandates. If we, with strenuous efforts make bold and venture to oppose and conquer our custom, it is only to give place to or substitute, some other with scepted authority. We despise and discard our custom deeming it bad, abominable and unreasonable and immediately embrace another older or younger with all our warmth Therefore, to any man, it will be clear that during the short term of this ephemeral appearance of Life in our human Form, it is nothing but a bondage to some custom or another. It is an undoubted authority in shaping our Faith to any tune it pleases and fixing it in our imagination.

Custom takes hold of man's imagination and fancy, and straightway moulds his faith, and consequently his action, in accordance therewith. The authority of custom is so very irresistible, because the penalties of the non-observance thereof, are rendered very painful and dreadful to the stray defaulter, though not in fact, at least in his own fancy and imagination. In the case of truly reasonable and advantageous customs, the observer believes in the propriety of what they enjoin because they are based upon reason and advantage and as such will properly come under the influence of Knowledge on Faith.

One essential feature of custom, not to be lost sight of, is that its value is enhanced a thousand-fold by universal prevalence or constant repetition. We naturally respect a custom, if it is a world-wide or universal though it may not be a reasona-

ble and really useful one. We may even truly love it. We therefore obey its mandates with implicit faith. A Hindu boy sees his own parents and others as well prostrate and pray before an idol and at first impelled perhaps by no other principle motive, or faith than his curiosity and his own notorious propensity to imitate, does the act himself. Again he sees the same act repeated by his parent the next day and even day after day. He also repeats the same act and makes it his habit to do it daily; so that in the course of a few month's practice, he even feels uneasy whenever circumstances prevent him from repeating the act. As he grows he finds that what he has been doing is the custom observed not only by his own villagers or townsmen but almost all Indians. The vague authority of so many people doing the same act, exercises its magical influence over his fancy and imagination and makes him believe in some sort of efficiency or virtue in his own pious act constituting the custom of praying. The above case will be equally applicable to anybody whether a Christian, Chinese or Mahommedan.

There is another though not less essential feature of custom; it is like a beaten path or road for any man to journey on to his life's end, if not with positive pleasure, at least with less pain or uneasiness without feeling the burden of existence. To deviate from it, requires an effort and effort, whether bodily or mental, requires a certain amount of labor which is generally disagreeable and not relished by man. He therefore naturally sticks up to some custom or another, useful or baneful reasonable or unreasonable, good or pernicious, and submits himself to its sovereign sway, and hence his faith also is shaped and moulded, pruned and modified, or ferretted out and eroded altogether from its mental strong hold.

(6) *Authority of Law and Justice.*—Law is but an embodied or organized epitome of custom. If a particular custom is good, useful and reasonable and at the same time observed universally by the vast majority of people, they naturally desire to make its mandates imperative so that none of their community can with impunity, disregard or disobey them, as can be done in the case of an ordinary custom. It becomes an obligation on the part of every member of such a community, that he should respect and obey the law though in his own particular case it may be an undoubted hardship and even unjust. It is with this view penalties are attached to the infringement of them and they are executable or enforcible. Nothing can be more unjust or inequitable than that the eldest of the four sons of an Englishman should inherit the whole of his real property excluding the younger three sons and yet we find that the younger sons are not a bit jealous of their eldest brother and never complain that the law is bad or ungenerous.

Tradition, custom, public opinion, the law, and the terror of the penalties to be incurred in case the law is infringed act as very powerful agents over their minds and make them believe or place faith in the utility of such a law. If a law working peculiar hardship in a great many cases can influence and sway the belief of man, how vast and wonderful should be the authority of law which in the great majority of cases does immense and incalculable good to man, over his faith? But unjust laws never operate upon man's faith. Justice is such a variable thing, that no precise idea can be formed of it. What may be deemed just and proper by one man is unjust to another. But it is within the province and competency of every man, to perceive and say—'justice' or 'no justice.' But any how if a man is satisfied that the

law is just, he will not only obey it but will put implicit faith in its efficiency and usefulness. There was a time in the history of the world, when each nation or people framed laws to punish severely its members that in any way differed from its common faith. What a frightful number of Buddhists were once massacred by the Hindus! what a host of really thoughtful men were burnt alive by the Christians for no other fault or sin than that they had the boldness to give their own meanings to the passages in the Hebrew scriptures, and disputed the correctness of common interpretation of them! How sacred and pious an act it was held to contribute a faggot to burn alive the so-called heretics! It is quite natural that the faith of the people should be greatly affected by such terror-inspiring laws. Thus we see here too as in so many other cases, that laws derive their authority over man's faith from the terror of the penalties annexed to them for their infringement.

(7). *Authority of Public Opinion.*—Public opinion is not this man's or that man's, but supposed to be all men's opinion. It is so very vague in its conception, that the mind will not be easily satisfied if we name any one man, however learned or great or well-known he may be, as an authority therefor. It is also so very variable and at times so very capricious that we cannot depend upon it entirely for the guidance of our actions. Notwithstanding these defects, it wields a paramount and undoubted influence and authority over man's faith and action. Its influence is even greater, in some respects, than that of custom, law or justice, for the authority of these latter tribunals themselves is affected to a greater or less extent by being enhanced or curtailed considerably as the case may be by its influence. In several instances it serves as the foundation for custom, law, or justice. Its essential strength or influence arises from the supposition that it is the real opinion of a vast majority of men. A vast number or majority of men means vast strength and to resist it by the force of a single man naturally seems a prodigious task and is highly repulsive even to fancy or imagination. The idea of being crushed and annihilated, as it were, in the struggle is even present to the mind of man that needs to resist public opinion, and the mind naturally kicks out that idea, as being entirely disagreeable or repulsive to its constitution. Man therefore cheerfully submits to the sweet influence and spell of public opinion and permits his faith to be affected by it. Here too as in so many other cases public opinion essentially derives its authority over man's belief, from the unknown fancied—though in some cases real—terrors of the imagination.

To be continued.